

KAN STEP Announces New Projects

While some have speculated that during the ongoing recession, funding for projects such as KAN STEP or other infrastructure programs might be reduced, the opposite is the case. The Congressionally-approved American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funding has infrastructure as a major focus.

KAN STEP, the self-help program funded through the Community Development Block Grant program and administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce, saw seven new projects funded in 2009. Three were funded earlier in the year and four additional projects got the stamp of approval from Commerce in late November and early December. With forty percent of the retail job cost being provided by volunteers (sweat equity), the grant funding obviously goes further and enables an average of two facilities to be constructed versus one based on typical retail construction. As a result, more communities in Kansas benefit by gaining a new community building, fire station or even a big undertaking such as a new water system.



Volunteer Steve Graham uses his scissors lift to attach the top plate of the mechanical room walls of the new fire station in Miltonvale.

Early birds have their worms frozen

There's an old saying, "The early bird gets the worm." In the case of the city of Caney, Mitchell County's project at Scottsville and at West Mineral, winter hit early in December as each of these projects was preparing the dirt pads for the start of footings. All three projects are steel buildings; cold weather stopped the projects from progressing.

Caney was the first project to get started. Caney is located in southwestern Montgomery County, west of Coffeyville. The population of the city is approximately 1,850 people. The city of Caney was awarded a KAN STEP grant in the amount of \$299,728

to fund construction of a new fire station for Caney and the surrounding fire district. Local volunteers will contribute \$325,637. The new fire station will be 8,200 square feet in size. The facility will include a meeting/training room, kitchenette, restrooms and an office. The Caney Fire Department presently operates out of an old building that was once the Caney City Hall and before that, the building had been a funeral home. The building has been condemned because of hazardous wiring, unsound second story flooring and structurally unsafe walls. The city has attempted to make repairs but the facility has many shortcomings. Plus, it is far too small to adequately house all of the equipment,

trucks, office space and training area. Several years ago the city acquired a site as the future home for a new fire station. Caney just needed the funding to build a new facility. They saw the KAN STEP program as the opportunity to acquire a much-needed facility. Dirt work was started in late November with topsoil scraped off and stockpiled. With extremely cold weather, no additional work has been completed as of February 1.

Rural Fire District No. 1 in Mitchell County was awarded a \$136,360 KAN STEP grant for construction of a new fire building at Scottsville. The total cost of construction is estimated at \$229,361. The community will donate \$93,001 in volunteer services. The new facility will be primarily for storage of fire trucks. The 2,400-sq. foot structure will also contain a restroom.

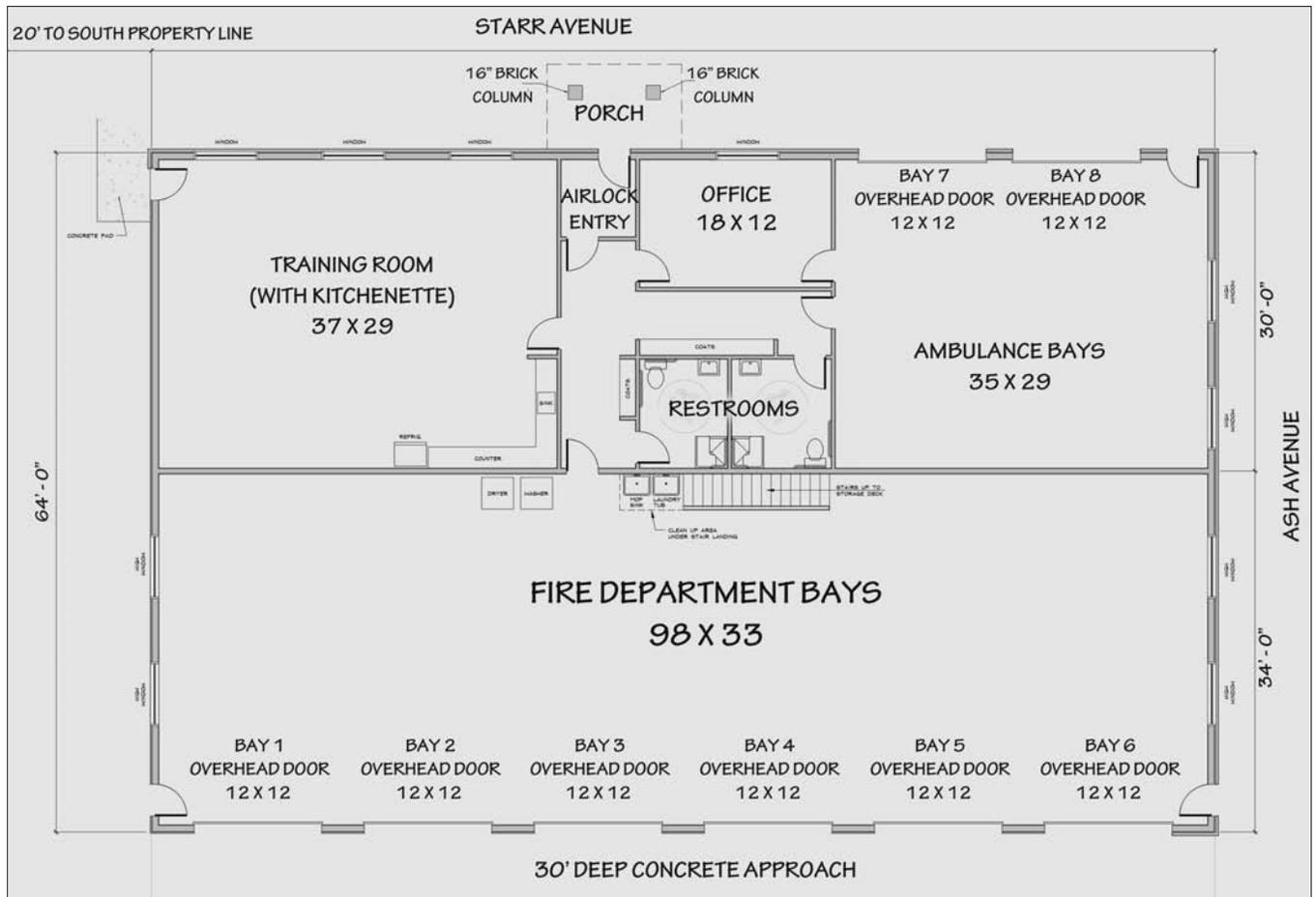
The city of West Mineral was set to begin construction of a new fire station in December 2009, thanks to a \$298,528 KAN STEP grant. A small pond resulted due to over-excavation of the site. Rain persisted during November and the site became little more than a mud pit. The site will



Miltonvale Fire Station exterior as it appeared February 2, 2010. Volunteers will complete the project in the spring of 2010.

need to wait until conditions allow it to be relevelled and compacted to proper grade. West Mineral is located 15 miles southwest of Pittsburg in Cherokee County in extreme southeastern Kansas. The town needs a modern fire station to house the fire trucks and equipment and a storm shelter for

Graphic below shows the floorplan for the Miltonvale Fire Station.





KAN STEP projects involve members of the community beyond those hoisting trusses or leveling concrete. Here, ladies with the St. Anthony Altar Society await workers on the "first build day" on the project at Miltonvale. There's no shortage of food or hospitality. Shown L to R are: Alice Copple, Mara Del DeMars, Deb Halepeska, Diane Catlin and Mary Richard.

Reviewing the KAN STEP program...

- ❑ As of February 1, 2010, The KAN STEP program has funded 67 projects for \$16,885,231.
- ❑ Communities have donated matching funds in volunteer labor, equipment and land totaling \$13,191,565.
- ❑ Volunteers have completed 56 projects totaling \$12,303,535 with matching funds of \$9,056,638.

the public's use during severe weather. The building will cover 6,000 sq. feet and will include a meeting/training room, safe room, kitchenette, office and restrooms.

As for the last four projects funded for 2009, most should begin construction between May and July 2010. The projects are at Sterling, Mankato, Sawyer (Pratt County), and Colony (Anderson County). Each community successfully demonstrated their organizational, financial, and volunteer resources to be awarded KAN STEP grants that total \$1,194,825. Local volunteers will contribute \$1,103,738 in donated equipment and labor. A brief explanation of each follows.

Anderson County will receive up to \$296,884 to construct a new fire station in Colony. The proposed fire station will cover 6,300 square feet, housing a meeting room, safe room and space to park fire trucks. Local volunteers anticipate donating approximately \$335,233 in equipment and labor towards the project.

The city of Mankato in Jewell County in north-central Kansas was awarded \$300,000 to construct a 4,800 square-foot addition to the city's existing fire station. It will include a truck maintenance area, meeting space and space to park fire trucks. Local volunteers plan to donate \$217,186 in equipment and labor towards the project.

Pratt County will receive \$299,971 on behalf of Rural Fire District 11 to construct a new fire station in Sawyer. The proposed fire station will cover 7,200 square feet; it will house an office, meeting room, mechanic's bay and space to park fire trucks. Local volunteers anticipate donating approximately \$287,142 in equipment and labor.

The city of Sterling located in Rice County in central Kansas is being awarded \$297,970 to rehabilitate the Studio 96 Building in downtown Sterling. The rehabilitated building will serve as a community center/art studio and gallery. Local volunteers anticipate donating approximately \$266,177 in equipment and labor towards the project.

Shane Holthaus has been a KAN STEP Tech for KRWA since November 2002. He previously worked for 13 years for a professional contractor.



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